Developing Taiwanese Elementary School Pupils’ EFL Communicative Competence through Communicative Language Activities

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Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to explore the application of communicative language activities in English lessons for developing Taiwanese elementary school pupils’ EFL communicative competence. The three objectives of the Grade 1-9 National Curriculum Guidelines constituted by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan for elementary school pupils learning English are ‘basic communication ability’, ‘interest in learning English’ and ‘understanding of both the native culture and the culture of the target language’. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can satisfy these requirements to equip students to become efficient communicators who are able to use appropriate linguistic forms in various situations to communicate meanings for specific purposes. That is, task-based communicative activities, central to CLT, can create a context which exposes learners to the target language and involves them in communicating and participating actively for promoting communicative competence. Also, many game-like communicative activities are fun so that they can motivate learners’ interest in learning, and some language activities can inspire learners’ cultural awareness which facilitates foreign language learning more efficiently. It is expected that through applying communicative language activities in regular English lessons, Taiwanese EFL learners can be equipped with both linguistic competence and communicative competence to be communicatively competent language users.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), communicative competence, communicative activities, EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

1. Introduction

The status of English language in Taiwan

English is one of the predominant languages for international communication. In Taiwan, English nowadays is the major medium to communicate with the whole world and the main language used for international trade and academic study. Although Taiwan is an ethnically homogeneous society and most people speak Chinese for daily communication, good mastery of English language has usually been taken as a symbol of elitism in the competitive Taiwanese society. Many parents recognize the importance of English and believe that an early start in learning English can assure their children of better English achievement in the pursuit of further education and future career. Therefore, long before children enter elementary schools, parents send their children to bilingual kindergartens or English cram classes, and have them continue their study in particular private elementary and secondary schools where English is used as the main medium of instruction. After completing secondary education, most students are expected to perform well on admission examinations to attend superior universities in Taiwan. Moreover, it is also found that many international companies which do lots of trade with English-speaking nations
are, all the time, looking for well-educated people who are proficient in English. Some foreign-funded companies
even speak English as the official language in the workplace, and increasingly use TOEIC (Test of English for
International Communication) scores as one of the criteria for promotion chances. In a sense, possessing good
English language ability makes it more likely for people in Taiwan to further higher education, gain better job
opportunities, and have professional promotion prospects as well [1]. The significant position of English is
obvious in Taiwan.

The situation of English learning in Taiwan

Unfortunately, despite years of English learning at schools, it is found that many Taiwanese students cannot
use English to freely communicate with foreigners. One of the possible reasons for this is that English instruction
in Taiwan has a heavy inclination toward grammar-translation [2]. To be more specific, Grammar Translation
Method or Audiolingual Method used to be the mainstream in EFL teaching and textbooks used in secondary
schools are primarily structure-oriented. English is taught by mainly explaining key grammar rules and particular
sentence patterns and having students do lots of intensive drills on linguistic forms and grammatical structures.
Developing students’ communication ability is not the main concern of the teacher, and thus conversational
English is less practiced at class. Students study the language of English by memorizing vocabulary, phrases and
sentence structures. Clearly, exposing to such a foreign language learning environment, learners do not feel a need
to use English for communication. It is therefore observed that through such traditional teaching methods, most
Taiwanese students have fundamental knowledge of language patterns, and can even perform well on the written
exams. However, when it comes to communication, some students seem to have great difficulty in transferring
what they have learned in English lessons to the outside world. It appears that the conventional English teaching
approaches in Taiwan cannot effectively develop students’ English communicative competence.

Students’ learning needs

More and more language instructors and educational authorities realize that it is not enough to teach students
how to manipulate the structures of the foreign language. Learners must also develop skills for relating these
structures to their communicative functions in real situations and real time. Thus, current second language
teaching methods aim to develop learners’ communicative competence which enables them to communicate
effectively in a second language [3]. Willis [4] (p. 19) recommends four essential conditions for successful
language acquisition which place the importance on the development of language communication ability:
‘exposure to the target language’, ‘opportunities for learners to use the target language for real communication’,
‘motivation for learners to engage in the learning process’ and ‘instruction for drawing learners’ attention to
language form’. That is, learners need rich and comprehensible input to increase exposure to the target language.
They also need sufficient opportunities to use the target language as much as possible in various kinds of real
situations. It is also necessary to maintain their motivation for keeping involved in the whole learning process.
Moreover, instruction needs to be provided for learners to learn linguistic knowledge to speed up their pace of
language development and improve their level of attainment. Among diverse language teaching and learning
methods, the major objective of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is to develop learners’ communicative
competence by involving them in doing creative activities/tasks in target language for communicative purposes [5]
[6] [7]. Within CLT, communicative activities can create a context which exposes students to the target language
and engages them in communicating and participating actively. And most game-like language learning activities
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are interesting so as to motivate students’ learning. Moreover, they can be flexibly used by instructors for teaching new language items, practicing and reviewing previously introduced language points. Accordingly, communicative language teaching approach seems to be better able to satisfy students’ learning needs to equip them to be efficient communicators in a foreign language. As a result, the Ministry of Education in Taiwan (M.O.E.) turned to rely on communicative approach and initiated a series of curricular reforms which reflect a more communicative approach to English language teaching and learning. For instance, English has been put as a required course in elementary education since the fall semester of 2001. Also, all English textbooks used for Grade 1-9 are compiled on the basis of the principles of CLT [8]. In addition, the Grade 1-9 National Curriculum Guidelines [9] set three English learning objectives specific for elementary school pupils to achieve. They are ‘basic communication ability’, ‘interest in learning English’ and ‘understanding of both the native culture and the culture of the target language’ (p. 124). The first objective emphasizes the equal significance of the four language skills for developing children’s English communication ability. The second objective aims to motivate children to learn English out of enjoyment, and the last objective is concerned with cultural awareness.

2. Literature Review

Background of Communicative Language Teaching

CLT initiated in the 1960s in both Britain and America, and has prospered since the 1970s. Its development derived from general dissatisfaction with the linguistic theories — the British Situational Approach and the American Audiolingual Approach, and also arose from the great dedication of Council of Europe as well as many distinguished applied linguists [6]. Situational Language Teaching was the dominant methodology in Britain from the 1930s to 1960s. Guided by its systematic principles of selection, gradation and presentation, learners learn languages through situation-based activities to practice basic structures and sentence patterns [6]. Likewise, the Audiolingual Method focuses much on the mechanistic aspects of language learning and language use through pattern drill, rote memorization and repetitive practice [10] [11]. These two language teaching approaches with heavy emphasis on behavioristic theory of learning for the mastery of structures restrict learners’ experience of language use by narrowing the focus only on language forms, and were thus sharply attacked by several linguists, scholars and educators who stressed that language learning came from using language communicatively instead of through practicing discrete language items [12]. They had a mutual awareness of developing other more appropriate language teaching approaches with the basic notion that utterances carry meanings of themselves [13]. On the other hand, there were a great number of immigrants and guest workers who poured into Europe during the 1970s. For the sake of meeting their language needs, the Council of Europe adopted Wilkins’s [14] notional and functional concepts of language use for language teaching, and designed the Threshold Level syllabi [15]. All this has had great influence on the development of CLT [6] [16]. As stated by Richards and Rodgers [6], it is the wide acceptance and adoption of the new teaching principles by those applied linguists and educators as well as the great support from governments that all contributed remarkably to the constitution of Communicative Language Teaching.

Communicative competence

The goal of the communicative approach is to promote learners’ communicative competence. As a result of discontent with Chomsky’s [17] narrow notion of competence, which is primarily concerned with abstract
grammatical knowledge of an ideal speaker-listener in a homogeneous society, Hymes [18] proposes a broader notion of ‘communicative competence’ containing both grammatical competence and contextual or sociolinguistic competence. He [19] (p. 15) claims that “there are rules of use without which the rule of grammar would be useless.” In his view, those who have communicative competence possess both knowledge and ability for language use to enable them to use the most appropriate linguistic forms of the target language to convey his/her intended thoughts or meanings effectively in their daily communication. Similarly, British linguist Halliday [20] also provides a more comprehensive framework of communicative competence which emphasizes the functions of language, the importance of sociocultural contexts, and the meaning potential of language itself. His seven basic language functions – instrumental, regulatory, interactional, personal, heuristic, imaginative and representational – are of great significance in understanding the theory of language and pedagogical purposes of language teaching [21]. Another British applied linguist Widdowson [22] distinguishes language use from language usage, and focuses more on learners’ linguistic skills and communicative abilities in text and discourse. However, it is Canale and Swain’s [23] model of communicative competence with four dimensions: ‘grammatical competence’, ‘sociolinguistic competence’, ‘discourse competence’, and ‘strategic competence’ that has obtained the widest acceptance and been quoted most often in the literature. Each dimension individually refers to one’s knowledge of the rules of grammar, phonology and lexis, the capacity of appropriate language use in social settings, the ability to produce coherent discourse and text, and the techniques to cope with the whole communication process. Other notable contributors such as Littlewood [5], Savignon [16], and Brumfit and Johnson [24] have all devoted to the theoretical development of CLT.

Characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching

Many researchers explore the numerous features of Communicative Language Teaching. Richards and Rogers [6] (p. 161) summarize the characteristics of CLT in a number of points. (1) Language is a system for the expression of meaning. (2) The primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication. (3) The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses. (4) The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse.

Nunan [25] (pp. 27-28) distinguishes communicative approaches from traditional approaches to language pedagogy. The differences are listed in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of traditional and communicative approaches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traditional Approaches</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Focus in learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus is on the language as a structured system of grammatical patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How language items are selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is done on linguistic criteria alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How language items are sequenced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is determined on linguistic grounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Degree of coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The aim is to cover the “whole picture” of language structure by systematic linear progression.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional Approaches</th>
<th>Communicative Approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. View of language</td>
<td>A language is seen as a unified entity with fixed grammatical patterns and a core of basic words.</td>
<td>The variety of language is accepted, and seen as determined by the character of particular communicative contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Type of language used</td>
<td>Tends to be formal and bookish.</td>
<td>Genuine everyday language is emphasized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What is regarded as a criterion of success</td>
<td>Aim is to have students produce formally correct sentences.</td>
<td>Aim is to have students communicate effectively and in a manner appropriate to the context they are working in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Which language skills are emphasized</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Spoken interactions are regarded as at least as important as reading and writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Teacher/Student roles</td>
<td>Tends to be teacher-centered.</td>
<td>Is student-centered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Attitude to errors</td>
<td>Incorrect utterances are seen as deviations from the norms of standard grammar.</td>
<td>Partially correct and incomplete utterances are seen as such rather than just “wrong”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Similarity/Dissimilarity to natural language learning</td>
<td>Reverses the natural language learning process by concentrating on the form of utterances rather than on the content.</td>
<td>Resembles the natural language learning process in that the content of the utterance is emphasized rather than the form.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Communicative activities**

Communicative activity is the major feature of CLT. Richards and Rodgers [6] mention three basic principles for teachers to take into consideration while designing classroom activities. That is, activities should encompass real communication (i.e., communicative principle) for students to use the target language to complete tasks (i.e., task principle), and also engage them in meaningful and authentic language use (i.e., meaningfulness principle). In addition, Klippel [26] suggests that teachers design communicative activities based on the principles of information gap and opinion gap for learners to exchange meanings or express opinions for real communication. Similarly, Johnson [27] specifies that truly communicative activities are characterized by three features: information gap, choice and feedback. More specifically, in language teaching, those genuine communicative language activities enable learners to engage in a communication process to probe at others’ intentions (i.e., information gap), and have them feel a need to choose the most appropriate form (i.e., choice) to respond to others’ expressions (i.e., feedback). Therefore, language activities compatible with a communicative approach can provide such exercises to immerse learners in mutual interaction, information sharing or meaning negotiation to achieve the communicative goal of the curriculum. The types of communicative activities are summarized in the following table [5].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-communicative activities</td>
<td>Structural activities</td>
<td>Focusing on practice of linguistic forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quasi-communicative activities</td>
<td>Relating linguistic structures to communicative functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative activities</td>
<td>Functional communication activities</td>
<td>Relating language to specific meanings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social interaction activities</td>
<td>Relating language to specific social contexts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Types of communicative activities
A well-designed CLT curriculum and instruction follows the sequence which starts from pre-communicative activities and goes forward to communicative activities. Different activities draw learners’ attention on linguistic forms to be practiced or meanings to be conveyed. The purpose of pre-communicative activities is to expose learners to practice language items in order to equip them with necessary linguistic knowledge required in later communicative activities. Within communicative activities, learners need to use their pre-communicative knowledge and skills to process communication for meaning. To be more specific, when conducting functional communication activities, learners use the language they learned to share information or solve a specific problem, such as spotting differences or similarities from pictures, reconstructing story sequences, sharing or comparing opinions and cultures and so on. While performing social interaction activities, learners need to convey their intended meaning effectively and pay attention to the social contexts where communication takes place. Role playing and simulation are typical social interaction activities for instance [5].

3. Discussion: CLT is a competitive alternative approach to develop Taiwanese elementary school pupils’ EFL communicative competence

Due to the unsatisfactory learning results that the conventional grammar-oriented practice methods bring about, CLT has nowadays become prevalent in English language teaching in Taiwan. As mentioned above, traditional teaching approaches offer learners insufficient chances to use the target language for communication. As a result, some students who are able to produce grammatically correct sentences are found their incompetence to successfully transfer the structural patterns they learned to the real life situations. The goal of CLT is to develop learners’ communicative competence, and the chief technique of CLT, in contrary to form-based approaches, is to have learners carry out communicative tasks which expose them to use appropriate forms learned during instruction to negotiate meanings, share information and interact with others for a communicative purpose within meaningful and cheerful contexts [3]. Accordingly, as mentioned, CLT is able to satisfy Willis’ four favorable conditions for language acquisition (i.e., ‘exposure’, ‘use’, ‘motivation’ and ‘instruction’) and is also able to serve as a framework to support the three objectives in the Grade 1-9 National Curriculum Guidelines set for Taiwanese primary school pupils learning English (i.e., ‘basic communication ability’, ‘interest in learning English’ and ‘understanding of both the native culture and the culture of the target language’). That is, CLT enables students to learn the target language through doing such creative tasks as games, dramas, songs or role playing for a communicative purpose. Furthermore, language activities are fun so that they can motivate students’ interest in learning, and also, some activities are designed to increase learners’ cultural awareness which facilitates foreign language learning more efficiently. Therefore, it seems to be optimal to adopt communicative activities in language classes. As Littlewood [5] concludes, the values and advantages of applying communicative activities in English language lessons are as follows.

Providing whole-task practice

Communicative activities are the core units in CLT. Communicative activities provide learners with a holistic experience and extensive practice on language use for real communication to acquire both knowledge and skills required for their communicative needs in various settings. Most communicative activities are designed to set information gaps or opinion gaps for communication to take place. In information gap activities, learners exchange information toward mutual understanding in order to collaboratively complete a task. Learners are expected to
express and sometimes defend their viewpoints on given controversial contexts while taking part in opinion gap activities. There are a great variety of activity types grouped according to their general functions and natures. Each activity highlights different language points or skills, and is suitable for different levels of language achievement. Thus, many language activities which are goal-directed and involve functional purposes can offer learners communicative language practice in all four language skills in such as pronunciation, listening comprehension, extensive reading, vocabulary building or creative writing and so on to have learners use the language productively and receptively in unrehearsed contexts. In addition, activities can be played in large or small groups or in pairs. They can be fashioned around problem solving, guessing, puzzles, actions, miming, role-play, simulation, drama and discussion. Variety and flexibility of communicative activities is undoubtedly the weighty feature beneficial for language teaching and learning. They can therefore be used in all the stages of the teaching/learning sequence to warm up a lesson, to introduce new items, to provide practice for learned items, and to end a lesson as follow-up activities [28] [29]. When being used appropriately, communicative language activities can truly bring about more creative teaching for teachers and more rewarding learning for students in the long run.

**Raising learners’ motivation**

Learners who are motivated intrinsically tend to have greater success in learning [30]. Most communicative activities can create informative and meaningful contexts to expose learners to rich, comprehensible and interesting input, and engage them in using the target language in a meaningful mode to promote communication more efficiently. Such communicative activities are meaningful and self-motivating to hold children’s attention, maintain their learning interest as well as foster their positive attitudes toward learning [29]. Moreover, many communicative activities are in the form of games or game-like tasks. Pupils usually stay involved and feel a keen interest in the task outcome, especially when the tasks are designed to be more challenging. There is little doubt that learning will naturally take place while children have fun and experience a sense of achievement from completing a task. Therefore, such game-like language activities are particularly suitable for young children who like to play games in nature. When they are enjoying carrying out classroom activities with passion and excitement, they are actually playing with the language and learning the language unconsciously.

**Allowing natural learning**

In CLT, learning is part of the task itself. Many activities are task-oriented and give learners chances and experience of language in use. In task situations, learners are immersed in speaking or doing something. Students use the language a great deal through communicative activities for the purpose of truly meaningful communication. Also, due to their use of language, they are exposing themselves to the target language environment. In Halliwell’s [31] words, it is learners’ continuous exposure and actual use of the target language that assist them to naturally learn a new language and better internalize that language.

Moreover, real world communication, especially in oral situations, is interactive in nature. Many communicative activities in the form of pair work or group work make students naturally interact with others and feel a desire to say or find out something. This type of activities provides practice in interactive formats for learners to be actively involved in comprehension, manipulation, production and interaction in the target language [4] [32]. Language is thus learned naturally and meaningfully through such interactive activities.

Additionally, communication involves authentic language [33]. The use of authentic materials is another
characteristic of the communicative approach to reflect real-life, authentic situations [3]. Language activities with built-in communicative functions create various real word communication contexts for learners to use available language resources to communicate with others meaningfully [5], which helps reduce the artificiality of classroom learning, and brings classroom closer to the real world. Learning language in this way, then meaningful learning can come about, and the language and skills that are acquired during classes can be recalled more clearly and applied more appropriately in similar situations.

Creating a context which supports learning

Communicative Language Teaching, a learner-centered teaching approach, greatly differs from conventional teaching approaches which are teacher-centered. By using flexible variety of communicative activities to immerse students in playful competitive or problem-solving situations, CLT humanizes the classroom to create a positive and supportive learning environment that makes teaching easier and learning more pleasurable. In CLT lessons, teachers are need analysts and activity organizers to design and set up appropriate activities that involve students in effective meaning making. Also, they are available as facilitators, counselors, and activity process managers who facilitate, manage, and supervise classroom activities, and accept students’ trial-and-error with tolerance as well as provide guidance and feedback for students’ performance. In addition, the teacher plays a role as a co-communicator who participates in an activity without taking the main initiative for learning away from the learners themselves [3] [5] [6]. Students, in a communicative classroom, are communicators and negotiators who communicate, negotiate, discuss, and interact with their peers to accomplish the given communication tasks. Students are also responsible managers of their own learning who take the central role in learning to perform most of the tasks on their own [3] [6]. Without teacher-centered authority, CLT does create a context which makes learners become active participants and language users and engages them in the learning process in a whole-person way.

In sum, CLT activities involving all the above features contribute to the increase of students’ awareness of target language use, improvement of language competence, development of their communicative skills, and creation of an agreeable and supportive classroom learning environment.

4. Application: using communicative language activities in a CLT classroom

A communicative language activity in this paper refers to any organized task with a set of rules for an objective and an element of fun which involves learners in cooperating with other pupils in a communication process in order to attain the goal of the task. The following is one sample of self-designed communicative language activity — Family Meeting that encourages language use for genuine communication. This group-work activity is designed to develop EFL learners’ communicative skills on asking for opinions and giving suggestions. The specific procedure for conducting this task is as follows.

1. The whole class is randomly assigned into groups with each group consisting of four students.
2. The teacher randomly distributes four types of ROLE CARD (see Appendix 1) to the class so that some students act as ‘Father’, some play a role of ‘Mother’, some are ‘Son’, and some are ‘Daughter’.
3. Afterward, have every student exchange personal information which is presented on the individual’s role card to search for his/her own family members for forming a family group.
4. Every family group is given a PRICE LIST (see Appendix 2) and a DRAWING PAPER (see Appendix 3).
5. Each family is told that they are lucky enough to gain £200 from lottery. And as shown on the role card,
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...each member of the family has his/her own desire that s/he would like to have once they have enough money.

(6) Each family should hold a family meeting to discuss and decide how to make best use of £200. To satisfy every family member’s desire, the family has to try to buy the items that each member would like to have. On the basis of the price list given, it is completely flexible for each family to decide to buy either cheaper items in order to save some money or more expensive ones till they run out of the money. However, they should always keep in mind that the total expenses cannot be over £200.

(7) Final decision regarding how to reasonably spend the gained money needs to be made by each family, and all family members have the rights to voice their own thoughts. The final decision should be drawn on the drawing paper.

(8) On the blackboard, the teacher displays all the drawing papers which show the decisions made by all families.

(9) One representative member from each family has to report the decision they have made and explain the reasons why they would like to spend the money in such a way.

(10) Finally, the entire class votes for one family for their most sensible expenses of this amount of £200.

Such a communicative activity as the one shown above is highly motivating. It offers EFL learners opportunities to explore the process of English communication, involves them in much exposure to the target language use in social contexts, motivates learners to take more interest in learning language, and eventually develops their communicative competence. It is suggested that teachers make good use of such communicative language activities to create a rather learner-centered and supportive learning atmosphere beneficial to equip students with fundamental language knowledge and language skills and further build up their overall competence to communicate in English. However, we should also bear in mind that using communicative language activities in teaching is neither a panacea nor a one-size-fits-all garment. When facing students with different backgrounds, learning styles, needs and expectations, teachers need to be more aware of students’ individual differences and be more flexible in their use of communicative activities to effectively develop students’ ability to process communication by using the target language.

5. Conclusion

Different from the traditional language teaching approaches which lay stress on the language usage of linguistic structures and forms, Communicative Language Teaching is an approach with the communicative view on language teaching and learning which is characterized by its pedagogical emphasis on engaging learners in meaningful interaction and negotiation of meaning in social contexts to develop learners’ communicative competence, the main goal of Communicative Language Teaching. The inclusion of task-based and goal-oriented communicative activities is the most significant change that CLT has brought to the classroom in the repertoire of practice exercises [34]. Through processing creative activities with natural exposure and actual use of the target language, learners are motivated to learn language forms and various cultures as well as develop their communicative competence. Apparently, using communicative language activities within the classroom properly fits in with Willis’s so-called four essential conditions for effective language acquisition: ‘exposure’, ‘use’, ‘motivation’ and ‘instruction’. Moreover, the features of communicative language teaching and learning activities
also meet the three objectives in Grade 1-9 National Curriculum Guidelines set for Taiwanese children learning English in elementary schools: ‘basic communication ability’, ‘interests in learning English’ and ‘understanding of both the native culture and the culture of the target language’. It is hoped that through applying communicative language activities in regular English lessons, our younger generation can be equipped with both linguistic competence and communicative competence to be communicatively competent language users who are able to use appropriate linguistic forms in various situations to make effective communication.

References


Appendix 1

ROLE CARDS

1. Mr. Andre Schappo
   Role: Father
   Age: 38
   Occupation: junior high school math teacher
   Hobby: gardening

Find your family:
There are four people in your family. Your wife, at an age of 36, is a restaurant manager and likes swimming. You have a son, who is a junior high school student, and a daughter, who is eight years old.

Your Desire:
Your desire is to have a lovely garden with beautiful plants and a fountain in front of your house. You want to plant some organic vegetable in the garden.

Note:
* You can agree or disagree with other members’ decisions concerning the ways to spend the money.
* As the eldest member of the family, you should start the discussion for the family meeting. Your responsibility is to make sure that all members of the family express their opinions or intention.

2. Mrs. Elaine Schappo
   Role: Mother
   Age: 36
   Occupation: restaurant manager
   Hobby: swimming

Find your family:
There are four people in your family. Your husband is 38 years old and teaches math in a junior high school. You have one son, who is a junior high school student, and one eight-year-old daughter.

Your Desire:
Your desire is to have a big swimming pool with a table and chairs next to it. After work, you like to relax yourself by swimming and having a drink.

Note:
* You can agree or disagree with other members’ decisions concerning the ways to spend the money.
* You are the person who is in charge of drawing down the final decision that your family makes at the end of the
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family meeting.

3. Ivan
    Role: Son
    Age: 15
    Role: junior high school student
    Hobby: playing basketball

Find your family:
There are four people in your family. Your father, at an age of 38, is a math teacher in a junior high school. Your mother is a restaurant manager. She loves swimming. You have a younger sister, who is only eight years old. She was born in Feb.

Your Desire:
You would like to have a basketball set and a tree house. On weekends, you like to invite your friends over to have a barbecue party or do some sports.

Note:
* You can agree or disagree with other members’ decisions concerning the ways to spend the money.

4. Eva
    Role: Daughter
    Birthday: 3 Feb., 2005
    Role: elementary school student
    Hobby: singing

Find your family:
There are four people in your family. Your father is a junior high school math teacher. Your mother is 36 years old and is a restaurant manager. You have an older brother, who is a ninth-grade junior high school student.

Your Desire:
You would like to have a swing, a slide and a statue in the garden. After school, you enjoy playing with your neighbors’ children in the garden.

Note:
* You can agree or disagree with other members’ decisions concerning the ways to spend the money.
Appendix 2

PRICE LIST

- Gate
  - a: £35
  - b: £15
  - c: £40
  - d: £15
  - e: £50

- Fountain
  - a: £30
  - b: £100

- Plant
  - a: £7
  - b: £5
  - c: £10
  - d: £10

- Chair
  - a: x4 £35
  - b: x2 £10
  - c: £10
  - d: £30
  - e: £5

- Pond
  - a: £2
  - b: £30
  - c: £10

- Slide
  - a: £12
  - b: £30

- Lamp
  - a: £10
  - b: £18

- Statue
  - a: £35

- Tree House
  - a: £50
  - b: £30
  - c: £15

- Swing
  - a: £10
  - b: £30
  - c: £40

- Mailbox
  - a: £5
  - b: £10
  - c: £150

- Scarecrow
  - a: £2
  - b: £8

- Table
  - a: £30
  - b: £30

- Trampoline
  - £20

- Basketball Set
  - a: £15
  - b: £20
  - c: £40

- Swimming Pool
  - a: £30
  - b: £120
  - c: £150
Appendix 3

DRAWING PAPER